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SUBJECT: TFIZ01: DART UMM QASR WATER UPDATE 9 APRIL 2003

SUMMARY

1. On 8 April, the DART attended the Water/Sanitation Sectoral Meeting, held at the UNDP Office in Kuwait City. The DART also met with civil affairs representative and UNICEF to discuss the water supply situation in Umm Qasr. The following report is based on these meetings. END SUMMARY.

UNICEF'S WATER STRATEGY

2. The United Nations Children's Fund's (UNICEF) strategy for improving the water supply services in Umm Qasr does not involve the direct use of the Coalition-built pipeline from Kuwait. This pipeline has the capacity of delivering up to 2,000,000 liters per day of potable water provided by the Government of Kuwait (GOK). At the pipeline terminus, the water is supplied to tankers, 22 of which have been hired by Coalition forces, for delivery within Umm Qasr and surrounding areas. The agreement with the GOK for the supply of water expires at the end of May, and reportedly is unlikely to be renewed.

3. The UNICEF plan involves several objectives. The first is to provide potable water to Umm Qasr by tankering water a distance of eight kilometers (km) from Kuwait to Umm Qasr. UNICEF has hired four tankers of 38,000-liters capacity each to bring the water to the Umm Qasr hospital and four other locations in the town. The hospital will have a 10,000-liter bladder, while the other four locations will each have a 20,000-liter bladder. Tap stands will be erected at the bladders to allow people to draw water for their personal needs. The water will be free. It is expected that the tankers will supply approximately 400,000 liters per day. Additional bladders and tap stands will be installed if the situation requires them.

4. The second objective (and first priority) of the UNICEF plan is to restore the pre-war municipal piped water system. This system consisted of a 75 km pipeline from Basrah to Umm Qasr that supplied 2,000,000 liters of water per day to a treatment plant, from which it was distributed through the reticulation system to houses within the town. The water supplied by this system, although bacteriologically safe, was non-potable because of high salinity. As such, the water was used in Umm Qasr for uses other than drinking. Potable water was provided by two commercial factories through private vendors. The water treatment plant and the two commercial factories were damaged by the war and the subsequent looting that took place. The overall restoration of this piped system will require assessment and repair of the pipeline from Basrah, repair of the treatment plant, and repair of the piped reticulation system. One constraint is that the pipeline passes through currently non-permissive areas, which means that neither UNICEF nor its non-governmental organization (NGO) partners are allowed to carry out the needed assessment at this time.

DART LIAISON BETWEEN UNICEF AND CIVIL MILITARY

5. At the Water/Sanitation Sectoral Meeting, held at the United Nations Development Program's (UNDP) office in Kuwait City on 8 April, a representative of USAID's Reconstruction Team reported that USAID was willing to rebuild the treatment plant and install desalinization equipment to make the water potable. UNICEF, which is currently prohibited

from working directly with agencies of the U.S. Government, indicated that it would be delighted to see such an activity take place. At the close of the meeting, a DART representative inquired whether UNICEF had any objections to a U.S. Civil Affairs unit carrying out the necessary technical assessment of the 75 km pipeline from Basrah and then making the results available to UNICEF. Again, UNICEF replied that it would be pleased to receive such information.

16. Also on 8 April, the DART met with Civil Affairs representatives to discuss the assessment of the pipeline with the civil affairs authorities. The DART will make an official request so that the official process for authorization can start. If no difficulties are encountered, the assessment could begin within a couple of days. The DART pointed out to the Civil Affairs officers that UNICEF cannot deal directly with the U.S. military and, therefore, the DART would act as a liaison between UNICEF and the military.

JONES